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OF
THE TRANSPORT
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OF

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On the 4th November, 1843,

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WRECK OF THE "PREMIER."

THE calamities of shipwreck have often been experienced by soldiers of the British army, in traversing the seas from one colony to another; but it has seldom, perhaps never, been recorded, that of so large a number of persons as there were in the "Premier," of both sexes and of all ages, every soul was spared to return thanks for a merciful, and almost miraculous, preservation from most imminent peril. This truly gratifying circumstance must be mainly ascribed, under Divine Providence, to the cool and admirable conduct of the troops; their perfect and steady discipline, and ready obedience to the orders of their superiors, creditable alike to the corps, and to the service in general, and strikingly illustrative of the value and the protecting influence of order and discipline in the hour of danger.

No army in the world is so much exposed as ours to "perils by sea and perils by land;" to hardships, privations, and difficulties, little dreamt of by "those who live at home at ease." Such as are engaged in the horrors of war, or in active campaigns in foreign lands, receive at all times the deepest and sincerest sympathies of their countrymen at home; but it is far less generally known or thought of, how much the British soldier has to contend against in "piping times of peace" — long, painful, and distant separation from country, family, and friends; now fainting under the exhausting heats of a tropical sun, now trembling amid the rigours of a northern winter; at one

time facing grim-visaged death in the varied forms of appalling disease in the Tropics, or exposed to the terrors of shipwreck in crowded transports, to the hurricanes and tornadoes of meridian, or the snow-storms of northern, latitudes. With reference, however, to the transport of our troops by sea, it is but justice to the Government to admit, that, in this respect, a vast improvement has taken place of late years: the transports and troop-ships now provided are of a much superior description to the wretched craft in use a few years ago; while much has been effected towards securing the comfort and safety of both officers and soldiers, in their long and wearisome voyages to and from their native country.

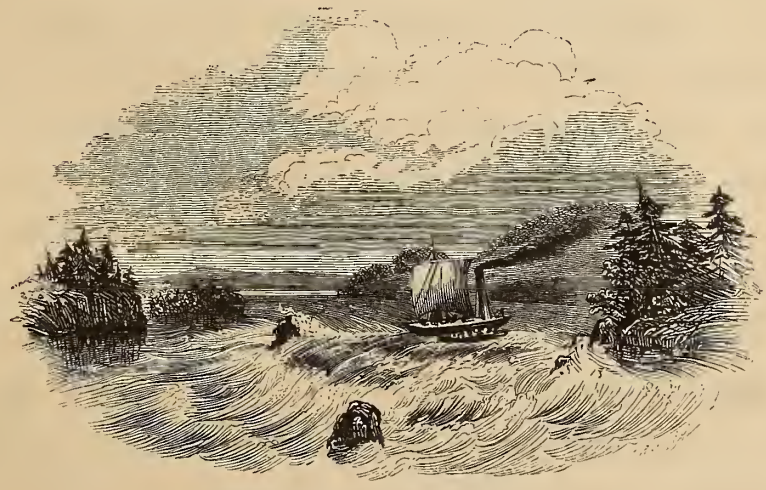
The second battalion of the Royals left England for North America in the summer of 1836; and, after serving in various parts of Canada for seven years, received orders, in the month of September, 1843, to proceed to Quebec for embarkation to the West Indies, there to complete its period of foreign service. Three other corps—the 23d, 71st, and 85th—had a similar route at the same time; and it yet remains to be proved, how far this change may be judicious, and what effect the sudden transition from the climate of Canada to that of the West Indies, is likely to have on the health of the troops. The cold bracing air of Canada, by the reverse change, has been found to act most beneficially on constitutions debilitated by the Tropics; but this retrograde movement is an experiment, and it will be interesting and important to watch the result.

The Royals, at the period above alluded to, were stationed at Toronto, in Western Canada: the left wing of the regiment, under command of Captain Muller, quitted immediately for Quebec, and sailed, about the end of September, for Barbadoes, where it arrived in safety after an ordinary passage. The right or head-quarter wing, under Major Bennett, started, to pursue the same route, in the month following; leaving Toronto on the 9th of October, in one of the Ontario steamers, for Kingston—180 miles—where it arrived next morning. A delay of some hours occurred here, the steamer destined for our conveyance down the rapids not being in port; but before

evening we were again under way, in the only available boat at hand — a small schooner-rigged steamer, with an Ericsson propeller, vulgarly denominated a "puffer." On board this little craft (the accommodation in which was sufficiently scanty and miserable) were embarked all the officers and a portion of the men, the remainder being crowded into two large bateaux, to be towed alongside.

Hitherto, in proceeding to, as well as from, the Lower Province, the troops have all been forwarded by way of the Rideau Canal; but, a few small steamers having been built, on mercantile speculation, of small draught of water, expressly for navigating the rapids of the St. Lawrence, with a view to expedition and economy, the regiments proceeding down this year have all been sent by this new route — an experiment that, if repeated, it is feared by many, will result, sooner or later, in some wholesale catastrophe. It is true that time and expense are both saved by this *rapid* mode of conveyance, which may do very well for insurable goods; but to huddle a mass of powerless human beings into small boats, and whirl them, with the speed of lightning, down these fearful rapids, seems "a clean tempting o' Providence."

The Upper Rapids — the Cascades, the Cedars, and the Long Sault — have for many



Descent of the Long Sault Rapid.

years past been navigated by bark canoes and large bateaux, and latterly even by steamers, with comparatively little risk; but the Lower or La Chine Rapid, until the year 1843, has never, I believe, been *shot*, except by Indians or other adventurous individuals.

This magnificent rapid (over which flows, it will be recollected, the waters of six of the largest freshwater lakes in the world) is by far the grandest of the St. Lawrence rapids, though of less extent than some of the others, its length probably not exceeding a mile or a mile and a half; but the slope is so precipitous, and the bed of the river so rugged, and broken by ledges and masses of rock, that the headlong rush of the stream, and fury of the foaming waters, are appalling to look on. Though the river is wide, the channel, or navigable part, is winding, narrow, and intricate; and the pilot should be thoroughly acquainted with its course, and possessed of great nerve and presence of mind: from the moment he enters the rapid, he is whirled along with such fearful velocity, that he has not an instant for reflection; and one touch upon a rock hurls the vessel, and all on board her, to instant and inevitable destruction.

On our approach to the head of the La Chine Rapid, the two bateaux were cast adrift, and left each to the independent guidance of an Indian pilot, the captain of the "puffer" not daring to take the three vessels together through so narrow and dangerous a passage: the officers of companies, too, left the steamer, to take up their stations in the bateaux of their respective companies, and share the fortune, whatever it might be, of their men. Up to this point the two boats were firmly lashed, one on either side, to the little steamer; but the moment the lashings were let go, they fell astern, in the smooth water, at the head of the broken stream; and, as we looked forward at the "hell gate" we were just entering, and looked backwards at the two helpless barks from which we were about to fly, it seemed as though we were meanly deserting our companions, and abandoning them to certain destruction. Here oars and sails are alike unavailing; the boat is swept along by the force of the current



C Hullmandel's Patent Lith.

Drawn from Nature by G. Bartnell Esq.

DESCENT OF THE LA CHINE RAPID BY THE RIGHT WING OF THE ROYALS

alone; the helmsman guides her, as he best can, through the centre of the rushing stream; and, besides his, every arm is useless and inactive: should a rock be struck, every soul on board must perish — the strong swimmer, as well as the feeble infant; — no power can save from such a gulf, but One!

Those on the main deck of the steamer were ordered to stow themselves away amidships, and remain perfectly quiet; and the officers, and a few others who were allowed to keep the upper deck, were obliged to lay themselves at full length, in order that there should be nothing to obstruct the view of the man at the wheel, nor any risk run of being jerked or washed overboard. The pilot (a fine intelligent-looking Indian) seized the helm with a powerful grasp; his dark eye became fixed, and lighted up with unwonted fire; and even his imperturbable countenance showed that the whole powers of his mind, as well as those of his body, were concentrated on the one all-absorbing point. We now entered the boiling rapid, and were instantly swept onwards at a pace, compared to which the utmost speed of a railroad seemed as nothing; and the two bateaux quickly followed in the same impetuous career. But I shall not attempt any detailed description of this thrillingly exciting and most magnificent scene, hoping that the accompanying Print may convey a more accurate idea of it than I can hope to do by mere words.

We watched not only the progress of our own little craft, but that of the two bateaux, with intense and breathless interest; losing sight, now and then, of one of the boats, as she disappeared for a moment behind the crest of some foaming wave, or became lost in a cloud of spray.

About half-way down the rapid we passed the wreck of a large boat that (having lost the channel) had been driven, a day or two before, upon the end of a rocky islet, fortunately somewhat out of the force of the current. A party of Indians had contrived to reach her, in their bark canoes, and were endeavouring to save some of the barrels of flour which composed her cargo.

The wild rush, the uncontrolled fury, of the waters, white with foam, or dashed into columns of spray against contending rocks, showed the extreme peril of our course; the inevitable destruction that must follow the slightest collision of the vessel; the utter fruitlessness of any efforts of ours, in the event of an accident; and the insignificance of man's works, when placed in comparison with those of the Creator, on a scale of such magnitude and grandeur.

I have since heard this singular and beautiful scene likened, not inaptly, by a lady who had witnessed it, to "a storm in a calm"—below are the wild and foaming billows of a tempest-tost sea, while above all is quiet, serene, and tranquil.

We reached Montreal in safety, the second day from Kingston*, and Quebec the day following, taking up temporary quarters in the Jesuit Barrack. About ten days after this, the "Premier" transport arrived, after a quick passage from England, for our conveyance to the West Indies. She was a barque-rigged vessel of 500 tons burden, remarkably well-built, strong, and beautifully modelled, but, as some naval men thought, somewhat over-masted. She had a great quantity of provisions and other government stores on board, was soundly rigged, and well found in every requisite, except the essential one of a crew: the men who came out in her nearly all deserted on their arrival, and the master and transport agents were compelled to ship such hands in their stead as they could pick up about the wharfs of Quebec; and a more worthless or ruffianly set could hardly be found on board any British vessel. With exception of the carpenter, and one or two others of the old hands, there was not a regular "salt" or true "tar" on board. The captain also quitted her at Quebec, to take charge of some other vessel, and the command devolved on the chief mate, Mr. New.

On the 28th of October, the right wing and head-quarters of "the Royals" marched from their barracks, for embarkation, in high health and spirits, preceded by the bands

* The Rideau route would have occupied about six days.

of the 68th and 82d regiments; and many were the ominous dreams and warning prognostics of old women that were *afterwards* foretold of the direful fate in store for the unlucky Royals. In consequence of strict orders from the Horse Guards, no more than the regulated number of women were allowed to accompany their husbands, and many a destitute wife and child were left behind. A few of these unhappy creatures succeeded in smuggling themselves on board during the confusion; but they were soon detected in their hiding-places, and, however they might have deplored their apparently cruel fate at the time, had ample reason subsequently to congratulate themselves on the failure of their enterprise.

The total number of persons embarked was about 350, including officers, men, women, and children, and the officers and crew of the vessel. The officers who embarked were Major Bennett commanding, Captain Davenport, Lieutenant and Adjutant Wetherall, Lieutenant Whitmore, acting paymaster, Lieutenants Lysons, Gore, and Vansittart, Ensign Waddilove, and Surgeon Dartnell; besides Lieutenant Harris, R. N., transport agent, and the master, Captain New. The only lady of our little party was Mrs. Bennett, whose heroic and patient conduct, throughout the whole of the trying scene of the subsequent shipwreck, was the theme of universal admiration.

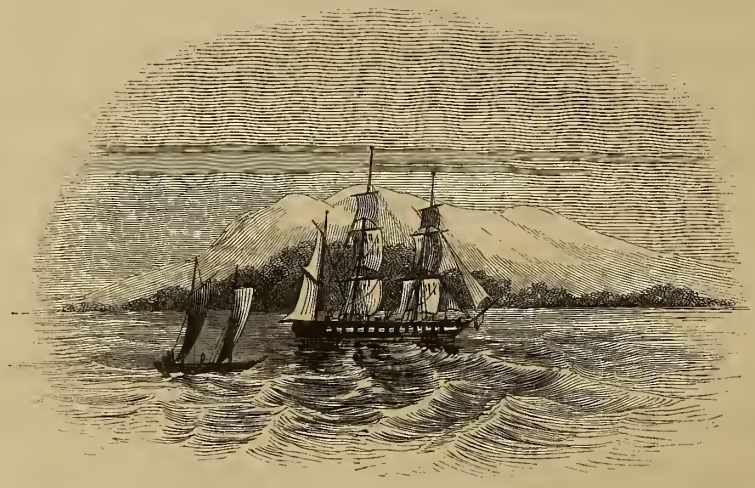
Two days were allowed for stowing away and securing the baggage, laying in stock, and shaking the men into their berths: the bustle and confusion of the crowded decks in some measure subsided, and on the afternoon of the 31st, the "Premier" loosed her topsails, took her pilot on board, and weighed anchor from the harbour of Quebec *, dropping gently down with the ebb tide and a light breeze from the westward.

The navigation of the St. Lawrence is at all times attended with danger, from the intricacy of its channels, its numerous reefs and shoals, and from the sluggishness and

* See vignette.

uncertain variation of the compass; but these perils are greatly increased, at the commencement of the winter, by the gales which frequently prevail at this season; the fogs, and snow-storms, and strong currents, which, from being powerfully acted upon by the winds, are so irregular in their force, as well as their direction, as seldom to be calculated upon with accuracy. Innumerable accidents, accordingly, occur annually to the late "fall" shipping in this noble but dangerous river. During the month in which the "Premier" was lost, no less than nine merchant vessels were wrecked upon its shores, with considerable loss of life and property. The marine insurance, I believe, on vessels navigating the St. Lawrence, is null and void after the 31st of October; and no ship of war is allowed to enter the river after this date.

The first three or four days after sailing were passed without any incident worth remarking; the weather, though particularly cold for the season of the year, was



"Premier" off Hare Island.

tolerably fine and moderate, but the prospect dreary in the extreme; the land on both sides of the river white with snow; the low and cultivated fields of the south, as well as the bleak and rugged mountains of Labrador on the north shore. We had a comfortable ship, however, an abundant and excellent stock of provisions and stores of all kinds; all

were contented and cheerful; and we consoled ourselves with the comforting assurance that a few days of favourable wind would exchange our snow and ice for the genial warmth of a summer sun.

We reached Green Island, 150 miles from Quebec, on the morning of the 3d of November; and here (instead of accompanying us to Bic Island, about 50 miles farther down, as he should have done) the pilot took his leave, hoping, no doubt, as the wind was fair, and we could hold a straight course, that we should have passed the last dangerous parts of the river within daylight. The wind continued to blow fresh from north-west all day, with occasional falls of snow, coming down now and then in heavy gusts and squalls, from the gorges of the Labrador Mountains; but the captain, naturally anxious to clear the St. Lawrence as speedily as possible, "cracked on" with all the sail he could carry, and all on board were elated with the rapidity of our progress, and the prospect of an early release from cold and dreary weather. In the evening, by way of enlivening the scene, and infusing something of mirth and gaiety through the ship, Lieutenant Whitmore—the Orpheus of our party—assembled some 20 or 30 of the regimental singers on the poop, where they sang "The days that we went gipsying," the "Lincolnshire Poachers," and a few other popular glees, in their usual admirable style. After passing the lighthouse on Bic Island (which we did about three o'clock in the afternoon) the course steered was east by north, Captain New intending to make the light on Point des Monts—the northern boundary of the river's mouth,—and there "stand away" with a flowing sheet, if the wind held direct for Anticosti. Owing to the thickness of the weather, however, this land-mark was not seen; and after running, as was calculated by the reckoning, within five miles of Point des Monts, the ship's course was changed to east half south, thus making, as it proved, an insufficient allowance for the force of the southerly current, which, though set down in the best charts as running at an average rate of a mile and a half an hour, is known frequently to set towards the opposite shore, during strong northerly gales, with a force

of five or six knots an hour, as it certainly did with us, and as we were afterwards assured must have been the case by the fishermen at Cape Chatte. This may, in some measure at least, account for the disaster that befel the "Premier," without attaching as much blame to the master as has been done by some. In further extenuation of Captain New, I may add, that a merchant vessel which left Quebec with us was lost the same night, under almost precisely similar circumstances: the captain (an old experienced mariner, who was then making his five-and-twentieth voyage of the St. Lawrence) steered the same course that we did for Point des Monts; was equally unsuccessful, owing to the thickness of the weather, in sighting the lighthouse on that headland; and, from thence, steered east by south, (half a point, be it remembered, farther south than we did,) and was, in consequence, driven ashore by the northerly current two miles higher up. Like us, he had no previous warning of his danger, and his ship drove right on shore amongst the breakers, and went to pieces before daylight; the officers and crew providentially escaping with their lives by swinging themselves from the rigging to the rocks.

As night came on the wind freshened to a gale and drew ahead, a double reef was taken in the topsails, the yards were braced forward, and, instead of running free with the wind on the quarter or abeam, as we had been doing for some hours previously, we were soon close-hauled, as sailors say, "on a taut bowline." At ten o'clock the lights were dowsed as usual, except one in the cuddy, and the officers, all but the one on duty, retired for the night to their cabins. Between decks all was still and silent, the watch alone remained on deck; the night was thick, dark, and dreary, and the soldiers in their great coats, the sailors in their "sou'-westers" and pea-jackets, stowed themselves away behind the weather bulwarks, amongst the booms, and wherever else they could obtain most shelter; and even the "look-out" on the forecastle (one of the unsainted worthies shipped at Quebec), as was afterwards ascertained, actually sneaked off unobserved to his berth. In this unpardonable dereliction of duty, and breach of a

most responsible trust, strange as it may appear, there was something, perhaps, after all, that was providential; for (to anticipate a little) I may state, that had the man on the look-out given warning of approaching danger, he could not possibly have done so many minutes before we actually struck, owing to the thick driving of the snow, and the darkness of the night; and had the ship then been put about, instead of running as she did into a sandy bay, she must inevitably have driven headlong on the reef of rocks that forms the eastern boundary of the bay, and have gone to pieces before morning. The captain, too anxious, as may be supposed, to sleep, remained on deck, occasionally consulting the charts which lay spread out on the cuddy table, and superintending the steering of the ship, which was found to be attended with more than ordinary difficulty owing to the sluggishness of the compass. To whatever cause this extraordinary circumstance might have been owing, the binnacle compass of the "Premier," from the time we left Quebec, required the constant attendance of a boy, whose duty it was to keep it in a state of activity, by tapping the box every now and then with the finger. In this state were matters on board the transport, when, about three hours after midnight, and while running at the rate of five or six knots an hour, she suddenly struck the ground with fearful violence. This blow roused me from a sound sleep; and my first impression, or rather hope, was, that the dreadful concussion was caused by the letting go of the anchor and chain cable, or the striking of some heavy sea—a delusion that unhappily was speedily dispelled; one or two still more formidable shocks quickly followed, and D. and I (who occupied the same cabin) were almost flung from our berths, and rushed instantly on deck, where we encountered a scene of confusion and dismay that can more easily be imagined than described. A heavy gale was blowing, with thick driving snow, the night intensely dark, the sea running mountain high, and bursting in floods over the decks; the ship plunged and laboured dreadfully, as if struggling like an ensnared animal to free herself, but in vain, her bottom violently striking against the ground with a most frightful and indescribable sensation, and the

sails slatting, with thundering sound, against the bending masts, whilst the shrieks of the women and children mingled with the howlings of the wind.

Our actual position at this time could not be ascertained; and the three hours of total darkness that followed seemed a century of anxiety and appalling suspense. The captain, I believe, suspected where we were; but no one else had the remotest idea whether we had struck on the north or the south shore of the St. Lawrence, on the island of Anticosti, towards which we had been steering, on a rock, a reef, or on a sand-bank. Blue lights were burned, and signal guns fired, though with great difficulty, owing to the plunging of the gun under water, and the want of a proper match, a substitute for which was at length found in a lighted cigar; and there soon appearing no chance of succour, or any possibility of getting the ship afloat again, the dangerous expedient of cutting away the masts was determined on, fearing, from the heavy rolling and labouring of the vessel, increased by the top-weight of the masts, that she should heel over on her beam-ends, or break up in her present berth before morning. The decks were accordingly cleared of all whose assistance was not required; and, with the aid of saws and axes, the fore and main masts were speedily cut away, and went over the side with a tremendous crash. This hazardous work was performed by a party of the soldiers *, under the direction and aid of the officers of the ship, the carpenter, and one or two of the old seamen.

The cutting away of the masts is always a moment of critical danger and anxiety, lest their falling to windward should cause the ship to settle over in that direction, thereby exposing her decks, instead of her side, to be swept by every coming sea. They fell to leeward, however, and fortunately without the occurrence of any personal accident, notwithstanding the crowded state of the decks and the profound darkness of the night.

* Amongst these a grenadier of the name of Moore was conspicuous, and was afterwards promoted for his general good conduct and gallant behaviour.



C. Hullmandel's Patent Lithount

Drawn from Nature by G. Dartnell Esqr

PERILOUS POSITION OF THE "PREMIER" AT DAYLIGHT

Most of the officers, many of the boys of the band, and a few of the sergeants' wives and their children, congregated in the cuddy, where the swinging lamp was kept lighting as long as possible: but here, as elsewhere, the sea constantly burst in through the side ports; the furniture got adrift from its lashings; and men, women, and children, tables, chairs, boxes, stove-pipes, and sundry other loose articles, were often washed, *en masse*, from side to side of the cabin. Those on deck were of course still worse off, — drenched to the skin with every sea that broke over the ship, exposed, most of them half-naked, to the "pelting of the pitiless storm," and flung every now and then, by some sudden and heavy lurch, into the lee scuppers, from whence they were dragged, half drowned, by their comrades.

Long-wished-for morning broke at length; and, as the shades of darkness rolled away, we were cheered by the sight of land under our lee — joyful relief from the anxious dread and suspense of the past three hours! Our situation, however, was still exceedingly critical, and perilous in the extreme. The ship was making water rapidly, and the hold filling so fast, that it was feared the main deck, where so many luckless creatures were now crowded, would ere long burst upwards; and as her back was thought to be broken, and the sea still breaking incessantly over her, it was not known how soon she might part asunder. The snow had in a great measure ceased to fall, and the wind was beginning in some degree to moderate; but the scene was wild and desolate as can well be imagined: heavy masses of broken clouds were driving across the sky; a tremendous sea, black and crested with foam, rolled in from the ocean; the sea-birds shrieked as they wheeled and circled above our heads; and our "devoted bark," dismantled and dismasted, lay bedded in the sand, and buffeted by every wave, surrounded by the fragments of her masts and yards, still clinging, by the tangled rigging, to the ruined hull.* Peering anxiously towards the shore,

See Plate II.

in the grey light of the morning, we discerned a few fishermen's huts along the strand, and some six or eight solitary individuals sheltering themselves from the storm behind the stumps of up-torn trees, and gazing at the wreck, but unable to render any assistance. Some large fishing-boats were hauled up on the beach, one or more of which we confidently expected would speedily be launched to our aid; but seeing, after a while, that the poor habitans had evidently no intention of any thing of the kind, we immediately set them down either as a heartless and pusillanimous set, who dreaded the risk of a wetting, or as a party of banded wreckers, gloating on the prize so unexpectedly cast into their net, and waiting quietly for the elements to complete the work of destruction ere they greedily pounced upon their prey. But, as the dim and uncertain light of early dawn gave way to the clear light of day, we soon became aware of the fearful, almost impassable, barrier that lay between them and us — a tremendous and overwhelming surf, that, like the celebrated surf of the Coromandel coast, rolled, in three successive billows, on the strand. We could distinctly see these "combers," as sailors call them, rising like black and liquid walls, each succeeding one still higher than the other, bending, curling over, till the lengthening line bursts upon the beach with thundering sound, and gushes, in a sheet of snow-white foam, far upon the shelving sand.

> "The billows float in order to the shore;
> The wave behind rolls on the wave before."

So perilous was our situation on board the "Premier," that, dangerous as this surf appeared to be, and indeed as it really was, there was hardly, perhaps, one on board who would not gladly have encountered it, slender as was the hope, in one of our small boats, of passing it in safety: and bleak and cheerless as was the barren and snowy prospect on shore, what would not every being have given to be able, at this



Drawn from Nature by G. Dartnell Esq.

C. Hullmandel's Patent Lithoint.

UPSETTING OF THE LAUNCH IN THE SURF OF CAPE CHATTE BAY

moment, to exchange the ship, where all had been so comfortable and happy but a few short hours before, for even this desolate and inhospitable-looking coast?

Several hours were lost in devising plans to get a rope on shore: the life-buoy was first thrown overboard with a rope attached to it; this was followed by water casks, &c: all drove slowly towards the land, before the wind; but no sooner did the buoy and casks enter the surf than they were dashed to pieces. The two small quarter boats were next lowered, but they were almost instantly stove in and disabled alongside. At length the ship's launch was manned with great difficulty, and Lieutenant Lysons and the chief mate, with a crew of four men, at the imminent peril of their lives, made an attempt to establish the communication. After disentangling themselves from the broken spars and masts that still hung about the ship's side, they pulled steadily towards the shore, but the rope they took with them not being "paid out" quick enough from the "Premier," they were compelled to throw it overboard to save themselves from being swamped. The next moment they were within the surf: twice were they lost to view for a moment, and twice we saw them poised in air, high upon the crested wave: the first and second combers were passed in safety; but neglecting, or being unable, to keep the boat's head straight to the shore, the next instant she was struck by the last overwhelming wall and capsized, and officers and men engulphed in the roaring billow. It is impossible to describe the thrill of horror that ran through the ship on witnessing this fearful accident; and little indeed did we expect ever to see any one of the poor fellows rescued from a "watery grave:" yet was the merciful arm of Him "who stilleth the raging of the sea," even in this extremity, outstretched to save them; the coming wave swept them to the shore, and they were dragged upon the beach, ere the recoil could wash them back again, almost in a state of insensibility, by a few friendly fishermen.

The failure of this, almost our last apparent hope of communicating with the

shore, was a sad damper to the spirits of those on board the wreck; nor did they derive much consolation or encouragement from the following little incident. On the beach, and nearly abreast of the ship, lay the root and stump of a large up-torn tree: around this, soon after the capsize of the launch, we observed some persons collected, endeavouring to direct our attention to something they had stuck up on the stump. Our curiosity was naturally excited by this circumstance, and the telescope was handed from one to the other of those who were thought to have the steadiest hand and the keenest eye, but it was not for a considerable time (owing to the distance, and continual lurching and rolling of the ship) that we discovered the object to be a black board, on which were chalked, in large letters, the somewhat doubtful words "*Keep out.*" This we interpreted, as it was intended, into an advice



not to make any further attempts to land; and our translation of the little memorandum was soon after confirmed by observing a boat drawn on to the sand, with her black side towards the ship, on which our shore friends had printed, more legibly, the more encouraging words "*No Rocks — sea going down — keep out.*"

By this time it was evident that we had driven closer in towards the land —

probably within a quarter of a mile, — and that the ship was gradually settling herself into a bed of sand; it was also a considerable consolation, and cause of thankfulness, to be assured that there were no rocks immediately about us. Still was the morning (for it was now nearly ten o'clock) fast wearing away in comparative inactivity; and though satisfied of our present safety, yet was the position of those on board anything but enviable. The snow had ceased to fall, but the air was piercingly cold, the wind had shifted, and was now blowing moderately off the land; but the sea, though subsiding slowly, still broke constantly over the decks: the fires were, of course, all extinguished, and there were no provisions procurable. A few of the men had managed to pick up some half-soaked biscuit; and a ham that had been cooked for the officers' mess the day before, part of a cheese, and some biscuit, that found their way into the agent's cabin, proved exceedingly acceptable to such as were fortunate enough to scramble for a scrap: amidst the whole scene, however, of confusion, dismay, and privation, there was no murmuring, no thought of mutiny amongst the soldiers, or the slightest disobedience to orders, no disrespect towards superiors, or any attempt whatever made to procure spirits clandestinely, as is too frequently the case under similar circumstances. The women (who remained quietly, with their children, between decks) seemed resigned to whatever might be their fate; and the men behaved, throughout, with that calm courage so characteristic of the British soldier and sailor in the hour of peril. Two or three of the serjeants' wives, and their children, had congregated in one of the after-cabins — the only dry spot in the ship; and an elder boy read aloud to them from the Bible; — a sober and subdued, perhaps I might say a devout, feeling seemed, indeed, generally prevalent.

Seeing at length that the time had arrived for another effort on our part, the heavy long boat (the only one remaining with the ship), after two or three hours' hard work, was lifted from her solid bed on the deck, and launched over the side.

This boat, as is usually the case, had been roofed over, and fitted up as a pen for the sheep and other live stock: the sheep were all bundled out on the deck, but the pigs and geese were most of them flung overboard, supposing that they would be able to save themselves by swimming to the shore; but, to our astonishment, we found that they were all killed in the surf, — a circumstance that may give some idea of its force and violence. The lifting and launching of the long boat, from want of the masts and yards to apply tackles, was no easy matter; but with willing hearts and stout arms it was at length accomplished. She was soon manned by the second mate and a few steady seamen: the rope they took with them was given out smoothly, and she reached the edge of the surf without much difficulty. Her passage through this was perilous in the extreme, and was watched, as may be supposed, from the ship with the greatest anxiety: more than once we thought that all was over with her and her crew; it was therefore with feelings of sincere thankfulness and joy that we saw her thrown, by the last wave, on the beach, and quickly hauled high and dry by the friendly hands on shore.

This was one grand point achieved. A few minutes more, and we beheld, to our unspeakable joy, a large country boat — a much safer and more manageable craft than the long boat, — manned by two or three Canadians, hauling towards us through the surf by means of the rope which was now stretched across between the ship and the shore: this rope, however, was so slight, and the distance so great, that we feared its own weight would snap it across, and leave us in a more hopeless predicament than ever; but she reached in safety.

One of the persons who came off in this boat — M. Louis Roy — proved to be the chief person of the village, and an active, intelligent man, as we afterwards found him to be. He spoke a few words of English, and showed us, with some exultation, his commission as a justice of the peace. From him we learned that the scene of the shipwreck was Cape Chatte Bay, on the south shore of the estuary of the St.

Lawrence, about 300 miles below Quebec, and two miles east of the bold rocky headland called Cape Chatte, or Cap Chats, which, with Point des Monts on the opposite side, forms the mouth of the river.

By this time it was eleven o'clock A. M., and preparations were immediately made for landing, — commencing, of course, with the women and children, more particularly as the men all expressed a wish that they should, if possible, be the first to be placed in security. This part of the operation occupied nearly three hours, as no more than three or four women, and as many children, could be ventured into the boat at a time. Had the scene occurred under other circumstances it would certainly have been regarded as highly amusing. The ship still rolled, and laboured excessively, and the boat pitched with such violence in the heavy sea that it was with great difficulty she could be saved from being swamped, or stove to pieces against the ship's side, or against the broken masts and yards that hung about the vessel: trans-shipping the women and children was therefore a service of considerable risk and difficulty. All were rolled up in blankets, and those who came first to hand were bundled unceremoniously into the boat. Two or three men first lowered themselves in; one was occupied in baling out the water, the others assisted in shipping the live cargo from those above. Some of the women, with more courage and reliance, resigned themselves quietly to the care of the men; others seizing hold, in their descent, of a stray rope, would cling to it with a death-like grasp, from which there was no releasing them, screaming and shrieking all the while as if they were about to be hurled over a precipice. The children were deposited with less difficulty, though not with less noise. A strong man, standing on the gangway, seizes hold of the first child within his reach, suspends it by one arm over the ship's side, and, as the boat lifts upon a rising wave, the man below makes a grasp at a kicking leg; the word "let go" is quickly given, the arm is relinquished, round swings the screaming child, sinking, as it were, into a fathomless pit, the head or body inevitably

coming in contact with the gunwale, or other part of the boat, but saved, in the collision, from injury by the rolls of blanket in which it is enveloped: and how they



escaped without broken bones, or from subsequent suffocation in the bottom of the boat, which was usually half full of water, it is difficult to conceive. Many a child was sent ashore without its mother, and many a mother went off without her children; all, however, were taken care of, and all reached terra firma in safety.

The women and children being thus, fortunately, disposed of, the men and officers were next landed in small detachments, ten and twelve at a time, an officer, or non-commissioned officer, generally accompanying each party. There being but one boat employed, the operation of landing was necessarily very tedious, and was not completed before eight o'clock at night.

The wind and sea fell considerably in the course of the day, so that towards evening the boat was hauled off and in with less difficulty, though few got through the surf without a thorough drenching. As each party jumped from the boat it was received with loud cheers and congratulations by those already on the beach; and sincere, I am sure, were the feelings and inward expressions of thankfulness to "Him



Drawn from Nature by G. Dartnell Esqr

C. Hullmandel's Patent Lithotint

LANDING OF THE TROOPS, WOMEN AND CHILDREN FROM THE WRECK

in whose hands are the issues of life and death" for a safe and merciful deliverance from what, a few hours before, appeared inevitable destruction.

The arrangements, general and in detail, by the commanding officer and others, were so excellent, and the affair was conducted altogether with so much order, regularity, and circumspection, that the whole debarkation of men and officers, women and children, was effected providentially without the occurrence of a single, even the most trivial, accident. Major Bennett, Lieut. Harris, and Captain New, were the last persons to leave the ship.

The dwellings of the poor French Canadians were readily thrown open, and their provisions, such as they were, cheerfully shared. Men, women, and children were billeted up and down in shanties and barns; a liberal ration of potatoes (or pittats, as the Canadians generally call them) and salt fish was served out; and a glass of country rum to each, which, after the long fast, fatigue, and continued soaking for several hours in ice-cold water, was neither useless nor unacceptable.

For several succeeding days the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men were unremittingly employed, from daylight till dark, in endeavouring to save property from the wreck. In this arduous and harassing duty they were assisted by a party of Canadian fishermen, under the active superintendence and direction of M. Louis Roy, whose friendly aid throughout was of the greatest value.

Provisions were, of course, the first things sought for in the wreck, as the whole village stock (which was merely the winter's supply for the poor habitants themselves) would be consumed in a week. Arms and accoutrements were next sent on shore, the officers' light baggage from the cabins, &c.; and, lastly, such articles of ship and government stores and general baggage as could be fished up from the hold, which, as well as the entire space between decks, was full of water. All these things, as they came on shore, were collected by the "fatigue men" on and under the bank above the beach, and piled in heaps under the charge of sentries.

Sundry, and various too, were the articles cast in by the tide. The whole length and breadth of the sandy bay was strewn with fragments of masts, yards, and spars, broken boats, casks, hen-coops, rigging, &c., not to mention the dead carcasses of pigs and poultry, before alluded to, and which were speedily picked up for the *cuisine*, while numerous picturesque groups of boys, women, and soldiers might be seen drying their saturated clothes, or frying fish and roasting potatoes, in the red embers of the numberless bivouac fires along the beach.

Several of the chests and boxes were burst open, and the contents presented, as may be supposed, a most pitiable appearance. Every thing was soaked with the salt water, and covered with a thick coating of black, slimy mud. The quarter-master-serjeant was a considerable sufferer in property, having had a large quantity of scarlet cloth and cashmere, gold lace, and other articles of military equipment for the use of officers and men, totally destroyed.

A small, unfinished, log shanty, that stood on the highest part of the bank, was fitted up as a quarter for some of the officers: the roof was covered with pieces of



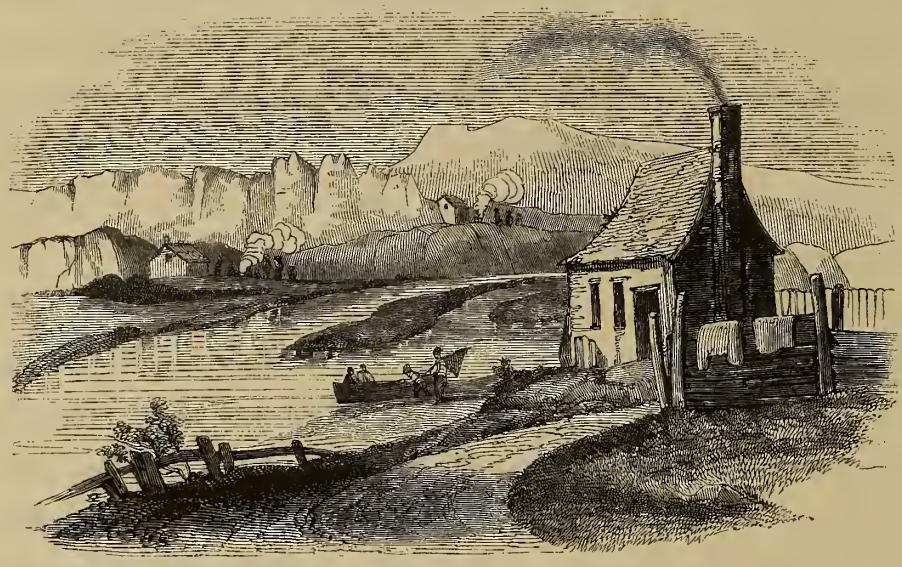
sail-cloth and tarpaulin, the sides with blankets, and a small stove, brought ashore

from the ship's cabin, placed inside. This little hut, however, was found to be too small (not being above twelve feet square), and was given up as a guard-room. In front of this shanty a flag-staff was erected, and a reversed ensign hoisted as a signal of distress to any vessel that might happen to pass within sight. The quarter-master-serjeant's scarlet cloth, and the stained and tarnished white and red jackets of the band and soldiers, were hung out to dry (after being washed in fresh water) upon the bushes and rail fences along the bank, where they soon froze *en masse*, forming a gay fringe to a sombre picture.

The officers' head quarters were established at the house of Louis Roy's brother, which was the best and largest in the settlement, and the only one at all suitable for the purpose, though inconveniently situated at a distance of nearly a mile from the scene of the wreck, and on the opposite side of the little river of Cape Chatte, which had to be crossed and re-crossed incessantly, in a rickety canoe, through sludge, and field-ice, which floated in and out with every rise and fall of the tide. I may here add, that two soldiers were told off to the exclusive duty of ferry-men and porters at this river; and it is but justice to them to state that they performed this arduous work for several days, with the utmost cheerfulness and good-will, from daylight till long after dark, wading incessantly through the broken ice and freezing water, and exposed, without even the covering of a great-coat, to all the inclemencies of Canadian winter weather.

This head-quarter house, like all the others in the settlement, was built of logs, and consisted of three apartments, the outer, larger one, about twenty feet long by fifteen wide, with a sort of recess in one side, and a large open fire-place, black with soot, and garnished with salt fish and pieces of fat pork, &c. Its native furniture consisted of a huge double Canadian stove, often heated to a red heat, a broken ladder leading to a large loft above, two or three old rickety tables, and some half dozen still more rickety stools and bottomless chairs, with a sort of trough at the window for the

general washing of faces and hands, plates, dishes, &c. This den served for "parlour, kitchen, and all."



Of the inner rooms, one was twelve feet long by eight wide, with sundry hanging cupboards. This formed the sleeping apartment of seven officers, who lay, like the bog-trotters in Connemara, in a "family-bed" on the floor. The mattresses which were saved from the wreck were, at night, laid side by side on the floor, occupying the whole length of the room. The locale of each owner's mattress was indicated by his pillow, but the coverings, being scanty, were in common.

The third, still smaller room, was occupied by the commanding officer and his lady in a commodious cheque-curtained bed (the only one in the house) at one end, while the patriarch of the family—a venerable old man of ninety-five—and his ancient rib, at the other end, nestled into the lower shelf of a lofty tier of berths, that rose one above the other to the roof, the other shelves being filled, in succession, to the top with a graduated scale of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

The whole interior of this house was dirty, black with smoke, and hung with

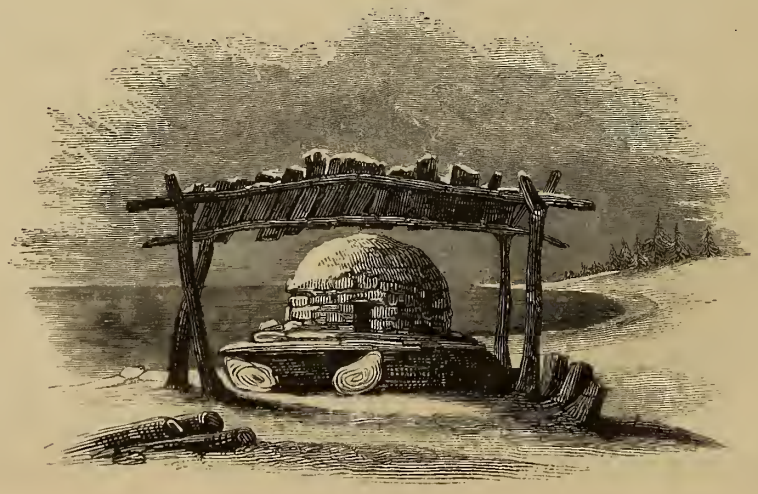
cobwebs, moccasins, fish, and sundry other like commodities, having nothing of the neatness and cleanliness of the French Canadian houses in general. The family, however, though poor, were hospitable, kind-hearted, and obliging. The old man seemed nearly in his dotage, and looked on in silent bewilderment at the uproar and confusion around him. The old dame, on the contrary, seemed to take special delight in the riot, and was the most active and thrifty of the household, bustling about from morning till night, with a broom in one hand and a bottle of rum in the other, keeping a keen account of the sundry glasses she disposed of to stray customers.

The inmates of the mansion, when joined by our formidable party, consisted of above fifty persons, including one lady, nine officers and their servants, the transport agent, the captain and mates of the "Premier," the captain and mates of the other ship wrecked in our vicinity, a steward and black cook, with sundry other attendants and hangers-on, besides the patriarch and his wife, daughter-in-law, and son (to whom the house belonged), and three generations of children, of all ages and sexes, to say nothing of sundry cats, and numerous dogs, from the snarling cur, to the noble Newfoundland and Labrador dogs, of which there were two or three fine specimens.

When you add to this formidable live stock all the light baggage of the officers, consisting of mattresses and blankets, trunks, portmanteaus, and carpet bags, coats, cloaks, swords, &c., the dining tables and chairs from the ship's cuddy, sundry articles of cabin stores, and provisions, saved from the wreck—such as hampers of hams, baskets of cheese, boxes of candles, loaves of sugar, canisters of tea, and cases of wine,—thermometers, barometers, and Sympiesometers, sextants, chronometers, and Admiralty charts, &c., it will readily be believed that, in this dwelling at least, there was little space to spare. Nor were the serjeants, and soldiers, and their families, as may be supposed, a whit better off: all were equally crowded; and many, indeed, in other respects, were much worse "located." One company especially—the grenadiers—in a wretched frame-built barn, suffered severely from cold and damp. The open

sides of the building gave admittance to the drifting snow, and the piercing wintry wind, with the thermometer sometimes below zero, whistled through the wide chinks and broken planks. But what most added to the misery, and, indeed, risk to health and life, in inhabiting this barn was, that the poor fellows were obliged to sleep on the damp unthreshed corn with which it was nearly half filled, so that when they lay down in their wet clothes they soon became enveloped in a chilling vapour, the effects of which probably would have been fatal to many, were it not that the officer on duty had orders to arouse them from their sleep every two hours during the night, for the purpose of drying and warming themselves, by dancing round a huge blazing fire that was kept constantly burning on the bank outside.

Amongst the various articles cast ashore by the surf were some chests and canisters of tea, and several bags of soaked biscuit, considered useless and thrown overboard. There being no bread for the men, and but very little flour, it was suggested, by Major Bennett, that this soaked biscuit might be reclaimed and made available for use. Two bakers were accordingly selected from amongst the soldiers, and immediately set to work to carry the experiment into effect. A bag of the biscuit pulp, thrown into a tub, was well washed in cold fresh water, which completely freed it of all



The Oven.

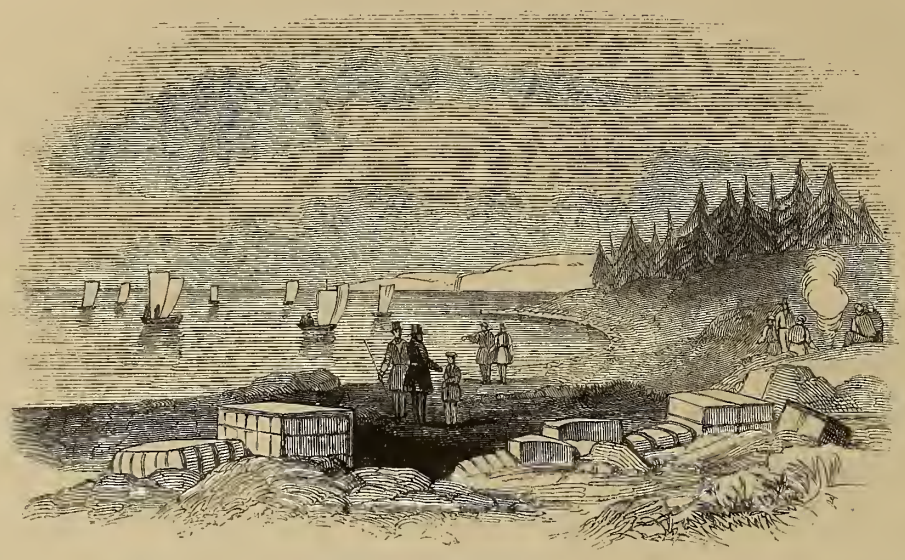
saline flavour; the mass was then worked up into a dough, with a small quantity of good dry flour, in the proportion of one of the latter to three of the former; the dough was formed into the ordinary-sized ship-biscuits, and baked in a large oven —one of which is attached to every Canadian house —and, to the no small gratification of all parties, turned out as good and as sweet as when first issued from Her Majesty's stores.

Had we remained some time longer at Cape Chatte this discovery would have proved a most valuable one, as would the restoration of the salt-water-soaked tea, which was also supposed to have been completely spoiled, but which, on being washed in cold spring water, and dried in a blanket by the stove, was found to have lost nothing either of its strength or its flavour.

The buildings at Cape Chatte afforded such wretched and insufficient accommodation, that the commanding officer and I, a day or two after landing, visited St. Anne's — a somewhat larger fishing-village, nine miles east of Cape Chatte — in search of further accommodation for the troops, not knowing how long we might be detained on this dreary coast. Here we found some tolerably good log and frame houses; and a number were selected, sufficient, if necessary, to quarter the whole wing of the regiment.

Preparations were immediately made for detaching a portion; but, as the road to St. Anne's — if road it could be called — lay along a beach, passable only at low water, and obstructed, here and there, by broken masses of rocks, it was found necessary to send the greater part of the detachment, with the baggage, &c., by water. The next moderate day, accordingly, the grenadier company, and the band, under Captain D. and two other officers, sailed for St. Anne's with a fleet of fishing-boats, and soon established themselves in more comfortable quarters. Mrs. B. likewise flitted from her crowded and comfortless domicile at Cape Chatte, and took up her quarters in the neat and nicely-furnished house of M. Sasseville at St. Anne's.

The bay of Cape Chatte is a small semicircular bay, with a smooth gravelly beach,



lying between two rocky points that terminate in low reefs stretching out to seaward, and situated about two miles east of the bold rocky headland from which it derives its name. Into its western end runs a small river, from which the inhabitants of this peaceful village procure a considerable quantity of fine salmon. This, with the abundant supply of other fish taken in the bay, a few potatoes, and an odd barrel of flour procured from St. Anne's, form almost the whole subsistence of these simple people, who, to use a Yankee phrase, are "as healthy as fishes," having no Doctor amongst them, "barrin" the mother of all the Roys, who practises the "healing art" with considerable skill and success. Having been laid up myself during the greater part of my sojourn at Cape Chatte with severe pain of my chest, the old lady, who compassionated my sufferings excessively, insisted one night on prescribing for me a very soothing and palatable potion, which I discovered, after I had drank it (by a long wick in the bottom of the bowl), to have been the liquefaction of a dipped candle in boiling milk, suitably sweetened with maple sugar.

The settlement is composed of eight or ten families, whose shanties and barns are

scattered along the low bank above the beach. To the rear is a dense Tamarack swamp, skirting the unexplored forest, which is bounded to the southward by a chain of lofty hills, from which descend the Cape Chatte, St. Anne's, and other small rivers. The woods and hills abound in game, and the moose, carriboo (or rein-deer), bears, wolves, and other wild animals, are more numerous, from the paucity of settlers and hunters, than in most other parts of the country.

St. Anne's is the only settlement with which, as Paddy would say, they have any " correspondence." The other nearest village is Grand Metiss, about fifty miles to the westward; and there is no road of any kind, in any direction, from Cape Chatte, except the beach, which in some places is wholly impassable except for persons on foot.

As may be supposed, the majority of these poor people vegetate from year to year, and from generation to generation, without ever wandering beyond the adjoining village of St. Anne's, the fishing-banks in their front, or the forests in their rear. They have neither chapel nor priest, but on Sundays, and days of *fêtes-d'obligation*, the old patriarch assembles his own numerous progeny, and some of the other villagers, in his house, where they repeat their Aves and Paters with fervour and devotion (as we had an opportunity of witnessing), winding up the service with a simple and not unpleasing hymn, chaunted by the females of the family.

Some idea may be formed of the seclusion in which these people live from the fact, that when the Negro cook of the " Premier" first showed his black face, and white teeth and eye-balls, at the door of Roy's house, the women and children shrieked and screamed violently, and fled with precipitation and alarm to the loft above, to escape from the " old gentleman in black," as they fully believed him to be. It may be mentioned that runaway negroes are found in great numbers in all parts of Canada, but never before had one of this hitherto even unheard-of race been seen at Cape Chatte.

The day after our landing from the wreck despatches were sent off to the General

Officer commanding at Quebec — Major-General Sir James Hope — announcing the disaster that had befallen the "Premier." These despatches were entrusted to Lieutenant (now Captain) Lysons, of the regiment, whose gallantry and activity on the morning of the shipwreck have already been alluded to. He started about ten o'clock A. M., in company with two French Canadian guides. The first night he bivouacked in the woods, the second day brought him to Grand Metiss. This first fifty miles he travelled on foot, sometimes along a gravelly beach, sometimes over masses of rocks and ice, precipitous hills, and deep ravines, or through half-frozen rivers and deep drifts of snow. At Metiss he procured a horse and sleigh, and by a conveyance of this kind he travelled the remainder of the way to Quebec.

Having been assured by the Canadians that the journey from Cape Chatte to Quebec could not be accomplished, under any circumstances or at any season of the year, in a shorter time than eight days, what was our joy and surprise at seeing the steam-ship Unicorn make her appearance in the offing on the morning of the eighth day from Mr. Lysons' departure, the day on which we calculated only on his reaching the end of his journey.

On his arrival at Quebec, on the sixth day, the promptest measures were taken by the Major-General and heads of the military departments for the speedy relief of the sufferers, and the royal mail-steamer Unicorn was instantly despatched with an abundant supply of provisions, blankets, &c., and with orders to convey back, without delay, officers, men, women, and children, and as much of the baggage as could be collected and stowed away on board.

Captain Boxer, C. B., Royal Navy, transport agent for Canada, came down in the vessel; and to his judicious arrangements, and the active exertions of Captain Douglas, commanding the Unicorn, we were greatly indebted for the safe and speedy manner in which the embarkation was effected.

The sudden and totally unexpected arrival of the steamer, at early dawn, was the



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ABANDONMENT OF THE WRECK AND DEPARTURE FROM CAPE CHATTE BAY

signal for a "general rising," and all was an instant scene of bustle and confusion. Drums beat, and bugles sounded the "Assembly," and orders were promptly issued to have all ready for embarkation the moment a sufficient number of boats could be provided. The steamer, in the mean time, proceeded on to St. Anne's, where her unlooked-for appearance created as exciting a sensation as it did at Cape Chatte Bay. About one or two P. M. she returned, with the detachment, from thence.

The day, providentially, proved remarkably fine, and was the first perfectly calm day we had had from the time of the accident. Had the weather been tempestuous, as it almost invariably is at this season, no vessel dared have approached the coast; and the orders were imperative that the Unicorn, in the event of bad weather, should return instantly to Quebec, having, on a certain day, to convey the English mails to Halifax.

A small detachment of thirty men, under Licutenant Gore, was left behind, in charge of such government stores and baggage as still remained in the wreck and on the beach.

By five o'clock P. M. the troops, and a large portion of the rescued baggage, were all safely re-embarked in the Unicorn, and the last boat was still alongside, when the sky began again to put on a threatening aspect, and a heavy rolling sea set in, with a strong breeze from the north-east. Had this change taken place some hours earlier our embarkation would have been impracticable, and we should have had the mortification to see the Unicorn disappear as suddenly as she came, without accomplishing the object of her hazardous voyage. She now, however, got quickly under weigh, and was soon breasting the strong stream of the St. Lawrence, on her backward voyage to Quebec.

So crowded were the men on board that the poor fellows were obliged to keep the open deck, without a spot to lie down on, during the whole thirty hours that the

voyage lasted; and so severe was the cold that it was only by incessantly stamping on the deck that they could preserve vitality in their limbs, and save their feet from being frost-bitten: but, thanks to the liberality and forethought of the government officers, they had an abundant supply of good provisions, and an occasional reviving glass of grog, which kept them in excellent humour; and at nine o'clock the following night we all landed once more on Her Majesty's wharf at Quebec, amidst the already deeply-fallen snows of a Canadian winter.

With light and joyous hearts the men marched to their old quarters in the Jesuit barrack, where their kind-hearted fellow-soldiers of the 68th greeted them with a generous supper and a hearty welcome, relinquishing their beds for the night to the weary Royals,—thus cementing a warm, and, I hope, a lasting friendship between the two corps.

The following complimentary Order was issued next day, and read, by the Major-General in person, to the troops of the garrison, assembled in hollow square.

"DISTRICT ORDER.

"Assistant-Adjutant-General's Office,
"Quebec, 14th November, 1843.

"Major-General Sir James Hope has ordered the garrison of Quebec to be assembled, that he may have the satisfaction of personally expressing to the troops, by this Order, his entire and perfect approbation of the admirable conduct of the right wing of the Royal Regiment under the most trying circumstances.

"There is no regiment in Her Majesty's service that has more distinguished itself than the Royals have done; but good conduct in the presence of the enemy is so common an occurrence with British soldiers, when the excitement to gallant conduct is at its height, that the Major-General would not think it necessary to

advert to what is now well known. On this occasion, however, the distressing condition of the men during the peril of shipwreck is calculated to call for that cool and resigned intrepidity which has been shown on this occasion; and nothing proves the credit that is due to the officer in command, and to the whole of the officers, and non-commissioned officers, more than that such a state of discipline has been established in a corps as to command the confidence of the men under their command, in a situation requiring every quality of a brave man.

" The Duke of Wellington, in a late circular letter, has shown how greatly he values the discipline and intrepidity that is required on such occasions; and his Grace will, without doubt, duly estimate the conduct of the right wing of the Royal Regiment.

" The Major-General is sure that every man who so providentially escaped from the late calamity is fully impressed with the zealous, prompt, and important services rendered to them by Captain Boxer, of the Navy. At his request, Captain Boxer has attended this parade; and the Major-General is happy in having an opportunity of returning him thanks, in presence of the garrison, and of stating that to his exertions, aided by the zeal of Captain Douglas, of the Unicorn, the Royal Regiment owe their escape from the hardships of a long and dreary winter, passed on an exposed and inclement part of the coast.

" This Order is to be entered in the Order Book, and read at the head of every regiment in the Eastern District of Canada; and the Major-General requests that Major Bennett, who commanded the wing on this occasion with so much ability and credit to himself, will enter the name of every officer and non-commissioned officer present, and will record the journey of 300 miles performed with such perseverance by Lieutenant Lysons.

(Signed) " J. A. Hope,

" Major-General."

Her Majesty was also graciously pleased, as well as His Grace the Duke of Wellington (on the reports of the shipwreck reaching England), to express their approbation, in very flattering terms, of the conduct of the regiment on this occasion.

I cannot, perhaps, conclude this brief and imperfect narrative better than by adding a short extract from the "Soldiers' Thanksgiving," a beautiful and impressive sermon preached by the Lord Bishop of Montreal upon the occasion of divine service held in the Cathedral church of Quebec, on the safe return of the right wing of the Royals to that place:—

"My brethren of the civil congregation of this church,—It is a gratifying circumstance that the service for which we are assembled is held at the spontaneous desire of those gallant and hardy men, here among us, fresh from a scene of suffering and peril, who have not judged it derogatory to their gallantry or hardihood to be sensible of the mercy of their God. The feeling which has prompted them upon this occasion to *pay their vows unto the Lord in the presence of His people* is a feeling which originated purely with themselves, and appears to have animated all ranks alike. And I hope it may be regarded as one among many indications of the falsity of a notion found sometimes to prevail amongst mankind, that the profession of arms is inconsistent with the serious and earnest profession of Christianity,—that the soldiers of an earthly sovereign are ill-fitted to be the soldiers of the Cross. Against such a notion we cannot too earnestly contend, especially on account of its dangerous effect upon the minds of military men themselves. As if expressly to guard against such an error, the New Testament (not to go back to the many instances of eminently pious warriors recorded in the Old) very prominently sets before us examples amply sufficient to contradict it. * * * * * But, blessed be God, we may appeal, in our own day, to numerous and unquestionable examples familiarly known. * * * * * Nor can we fail to recognise an additional claim to our interest in the obligations which we

lie under to the Queen's troops, and in a signal manner to this gallant regiment, for protection, by the Divine blessing, in dangers of our own, of no very remote occurrence, in this Province. The preservation of those who were thus our friends in need must be a matter of gratitude to us. As our *friends,* then, my military hearers, I address you, and with the voice of a friend I charge it upon you to remember to your dying day the mercy and the warning you have experienced. Oh, if there are any among you who in the imminent crisis of your danger, brought to the verge of death and eternity, were untouched by the thought of your salvation, the sense of your dependence upon God, and the need which you have of pardon at His hand, or who, in the hour of your providential deliverance, lifted no vow of praise within your hearts, nor resolution of future devotedness to *Him,* let me conjure you to look back *now* upon the scene, and ask whether, if the elements, let loose by His pleasure, in their fury had swept you to destruction, you were prepared to go before Him. *Prepare to meet thy God* is a summons which we find recorded in His holy Word; and it is not a summons sounded in our ears by all the changes and chances which we witness in this uncertain life, but sounded loudly, like a trumpet of alarm, in the perils which are encountered upon the raging deep! And having just escaped from such a scene, will you not learn from it the lesson of the fear of God? The common contemplation of the power of God, in the control of the wilder elements of nature, serves to read you this lesson. Fear ye not me? saith the Lord. *Will ye not tremble at my presence, which hath placed the sand for the bound of the sea?* By that power, bringing you into danger to make you sensible of mercy, you are now alive and safe, and under the shelter, at this moment, of the sanctuary itself, *paying your vows in the presence of God's people.* You have *seen the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep;* you have seen *at his word the stormy wind arise which lifteth up the waves thereof;* you have experienced the terrors of tempest, and of shipwreck, in a bleak season, and upon an almost desolate shore; and you have been *brought to a haven* where you would there surely have said

that you *would* thankfully *be*. Mark, then, the words of the Psalmist which follow: *O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness, and declare the wonders that he doeth for the children of men!*"

I may here be pardoned for subtracting the following complimentary *note* from the worthy bishop's sermon, which was published, with his permission, by the officers of the regiment:—

" Nothing could exceed the pleasing and touching effect given to the beautiful services of the church, upon the occasion on which this sermon was preached, by the chanting and singing of a large choir of men and boys, formed within the battalion by one of the officers (Lieut. Whitmore), who has most assiduously and perseveringly devoted himself to this object. The greatest fondness for these performances pervades them all; and it can hardly be doubted that it is a practice which has had a happy influence, generally, upon the tone of character among the men, the exemplary steadiness of whose conduct, in the whole of the trying scenes through which they recently passed, as well as upon other occasions, has attracted much notice and admiration."

" Since the foregoing note was written arrangements have been made for employing the voluntary services of this excellent regimental choir, under the direction of the same indefatigable officer, and in concert with the organist, at the morning service of the civil congregation in the cathedral, during the stay of the regiment in Quebec.

" In confirmation of what is said above respecting the presumed effect of this cultivation of vocal music upon the men (although it is not meant to say that there have been other circumstances of advantage which may help to account for their correct deportment), it may be mentioned, with reference to those amongst them who actually formed the choir, that in the hour of their most imminent peril there were several who evinced, in the most gratifying manner, their composed reliance upon the only hope of sinful man. These individuals, unprompted by each other, yet with a

consentaneous feeling, called to mind, and repeated to the officer already mentioned, the commencing lines of a hymn expressing, in a manner directly appropriate to their awful situation, their trust in the protection of Christ:"—

"Why those fears? — behold, 'tis Jesus
Holds the helm and guides the ship."

THE END.

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